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ABSTRACT

Why trainee teachers join the teaching profession in Jamaica was studied. Previous research has suggested that their reasons may be extrinsic (related to characteristics of the job), intrinsic (related to the individual's wishes), or altruistic (related to the social contribution). Some reasons that could be classified into these 3 categories were identified in 130 interviews with students from the Teaching College of the University of the West Indies. Approximately one third of the students at Jamaican colleges of education (n=1,444) were asked to rate their agreement with each of the 19 reasons on a scale from 0 to 9. Results indicate that extrinsic, intrinsic, and altruistic consideration were three distinct motivations teacher trainees had for choosing the profession. Extrinsic motivation was the most important, accounting for 24.2% of the variance, as compared to 14.6% for altruistic motivation, and 8.8% for intrinsic motivation. (Contains 3 tables and 16 references.) (SLD)

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A Three Factor Model to Resolve the Controversies of Why Trainees are Motivated to Choose the Teaching Profession

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Abstract

This paper tries to settle the issue of why trainee teachers join the teaching profession in Jamaica. Previous research has suggested that the reasons may be Extrinsic, Intrinsic or Altruistic. The paper notes some statistics to illustrate fluctuations in teacher supply and employment. It is considered that knowledge of why trainee teachers choose the teaching profession could be used to help reduce this fluctuation in teacher supply and employment in Jamaica and the Caribbean. This paper then endeavours to settle the issue of whether teacher trainees in Jamaica join the profession for Extrinsic, Intrinsic or Altruistic reasons.

Other studies on reasons for joining the teaching profession have tended to elicit or suggest reasons and then rank these reasons in order of popularity and some note that the reasons fall into the themes of Extrinsic, Intrinsic or Altruistic motivation. In common with these other studies, this study also found prevalent reasons from initial interview data (n=130 interviews from the Teaching Colleges). However, this study then asked approximately one third of the College population (n=1444) to rate their agreement with each reason on a scale from zero to nine; zero meaning 'no agreement' and nine meaning 'maximum agreement'. This 0 to 9 rating design was used so as to calculate the inter-relationships between the reasons rather than just ranking them in popularity as was done in other studies. Analysis of the inter-relationships between reasons preferred by the same trainees allowed this study to dertemine if groups of reasons apply to some trainees rather than others and whether those groups of preferred reasons match the suggested themes of Extrinsic, Intrinsic or Altruistic motivation. The design further allowed the importance of these themes in the career decisions of the trainees to be measured.

Rationale for the study - Fluctuations in teacher supply and employment in Jamaica

The fluctuation of teacher supply and employment in Jamaica and other Caribbean countries makes it imperative that we settle the issue of why local students chose teaching as a profession. This knowledge could be used to improve recruitment and retention of local teachers and so help to reduce the fluctuation of teacher supply and employment.

The following selected figures in table 1 on teacher output and employment in Jamaica give some perspective on this fluctuation. These figures are derived from the year-by-year Economic and Social Survey Jamaica unless otherwise noted. The MOE figures for 1995/96 showed that 20,878 teachers were employed which was 2.7% down on the previous year. 79% were trained (MOE 1995-6). To

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give further perspective selected figures in the changing school population that are served by the supply and employment of these teachers

Year	Teachers employed	Teachers trained	
1979/80	20010		
1987/88	18194	15584	86%
1988/89	18246	15523	85%
1990/91	18523	14297	77%
1991/92	19465	14924	77%
1995/96	20878	16494	79%
School aged population 5-19 yrs.			
1970	710900		
1980	862800		
1982	835750		
1992	783050		

Table 1. Teacher output and employment in Jamaica

Reasons why teacher trainees choose the profession

There has been considerable research on why new teachers join the profession (Frusher & Newton 1987; Ethington 1987). Suzanne Stiegelbauer (1992) asked 203 students accepted at the Faculty of Education, University of Toronto (Canada) about their reasons for entering the profession. The following themes emerged: (a) the need to make a difference to students and society; (b) teachers as role models for students; (c) the teacher-student exchange as one of mutual growth and continuous learning for both; (d) a wish to share personal knowledge and expertise; and (e) the creation of a positive learning environment. Sandra Hayes (1990) surveyed 100 college students majoring in education at Northwestern Oklahoma State University. She found that: (a) most students chose teaching in order to make a positive difference in the lives of children; (b) 92 percent chose teaching because they loved children; (c) calendar considerations were important to only 5 percent; (d) 98 percent felt that teaching would allow them to express their creative abilities; (e) 87 percent saw teaching as an awesome responsibility; (f) 58 percent disagreed that a 3-month vacation was a reason for choosing a teaching career; (g) 24 percent thought that teaching was a highly respected profession; (h) 92 percent thought teachers are not adequately paid; (i) 61 percent strongly felt that the rewards of teaching are not monetary; and (j) 32 percent had a teacher-parent and 54 percent were influenced to become a teacher by one of their own former teachers. Lois Weiner (1993) compared the reasons for joining the profession that were given by students enrolled in the Teaching and Curriculum program at Harvard Graduate School of Education and 53 student teachers at Urban College, a small public college in the Northeast. She found that the following reasons were given by both groups: wanting the opportunity to be creative, enjoying work with young people, and desiring a socially useful job. Compared to Harvard students, Urban College students gave higher ratings for the importance of salary and job security, while Harvard students gave higher ratings to independence and autonomy, desire to change society, desire to meet people of different social backgrounds, the suitability of the academic calendar, and the length of the school year.

Experience of teaching affects students motivation to choose the profession. James Levin (1985) asked 77 elementary, 92 secondary, and 28 special education student teachers at Pennsylvania State University for positive and negative experiences that affected their motivations to be teachers. Of the 956 examples given there were 557 positive responses and 399 negative comments. Most positive responses came in the category of "individual interaction between teachers and student

teachers," followed, in descending order, by "student feedback to teacher," "pedagogy," "achievement," and "teacher interaction with students." Categories with the most negative responses were "student behavior," "behavior management," "professional behaviors/attitudes outside the classroom," and "parents/community expectations/attitudes." The conditions that teachers experience in the schools impacts on their commitment to stay in the profession. Eileen Sclan (1993) surveyed 561 first-year teachers and found that teachers' perceived and actual workplace conditions were strongly related to their work commitment, career-choice commitment, and planned retention. This was especially true with respect to perceived school/leadership culture and perceived teacher autonomy/discretion.

Students' experiences at school seem to influence their choice of teaching as a career and students often make the choice in the last year at school. In 1995 Faite Mack surveyed 265 eighth-grade African American students in Gary, Indiana to explore their perceptions of teaching as a profession. The findings were that only 35.8 percent had anyone talk to them about becoming a teacher, and less than 50 percent had asked a teacher why they selected teaching as a career. In a similar study of 646 7th and 8th grade students from eight California schools, Ray Wong (1994) found that it was possible to identify 7th and 8th grade students who were interested in teaching. This obviously has implication for targeting career information to schools. Additional findings showed: (a) that male students and students with negative perceptions of the school/classroom environment were less inclined to express interest in teaching; (b) that students who felt part of the school were more apt to consider teaching as a career choice; (c) that Asian students had a more positive perception of the school/classroom environment than African-American and Hispanic groups; and (d) that European-Americans were no more likely to consider teaching as a career choice than any other cultural group.

A suggested motivational model

Researchers have noticed that the reasons given for joining the teaching profession fall under one or more of the three main themes Extrinsic, Intrinsic or Altruistic (Olashinde, 1972; Lortie, 1975; Summerhill, & Myrna, 1998; Yong, 1995). For example, Monica Brown (1992) surveyed first-year teachers in Jamaica and Caribbean countries to determine their reasons for selecting the teaching profession. She concluded that their reasons were mainly altruistic and were similar to those given by North American teachers as indicated above. Robert Serow (1993) in his interviews with 26 late-entry teachers identified Altruism as a major reason for choosing teaching as a career. When comparing studies it should be noted that there is some variation in the terms used to denote the same phenomenon. For example, Olashinde (1972) uses the term 'mercenary' rather than Extrinsic, as does Yong (1995).

Typical of the Altruistic reasons were: "To serve the nation", "To further knowledge" (Olashinde, 1972); "Service or contribution to society or country" (Evans, 1993). Examples of Extrinsic reasons were : "Nothing else to do", "To earn a living", "Teaching was the only choice" (Olashinde, 1972); "Undecided about future or nothing else available" (Evans, 1993); "job security and salaries were the main attraction", "good pay, secure job and vacation/working hours" (Yong, 1995). Examples of Intrinsic reasons were: "wish to work with children" (Evans, 1993).

Methodology

Permissions were sought from Training College Principals and Heads of departments in Jamaica island-wide to collect the data for this study. The study was in three stages (i) open interviews in the Colleges to find the most prevalent reasons that trainee teachers joined the profession, (ii) an island-wide survey based on these most prevalent reasons and (iii) analysis of the survey data to test the

veracity of the EIA (Extrinsic, Intrinsic, Altruistic) three factor model for describing these reasons. In stage (i) 96 student teachers took part in one-to-one 15 minute semi-structured interviews as did 4 lecturers. 30 other students were similarly interviewed in small focus groups. The purpose of these interviews was to elicit the main reasons for trainee teachers to have chosen the teaching profession. The interviews were 'open' in that the interviewees were asked what were the main reasons that they choose the teaching profession, rather than suggesting reasons for confirmation or rejection. This was important as it did not guide the interviewees into giving predetermined reasons. Data from the 130 interviews were coalesced into 19 most prevalent reasons. In Stage (ii) these 19 most prevalent reasons were used to survey 1444 trainee teachers across the island by asking them to rate their agreement with each reason on a scale from zero, for zero agreement, to nine for maximum agreement. The selection of the trainees for the survey depended on the degree of co-operation that was afforded by the colleges. Ideally random numbers were used to find a pure random sample within colleges and sometimes convenience sampling had to be used. This was the largest such published survey to date. In stage (iii) the ratings of the 19 reasons by the 1444 trainee teachers were entered into a factor analysis to test the three factor model.

Findings

The 1444 survey sample consisted of (allowing for some unfilled responses) 383 (26.5%) males and 1053 (72.9%) females with an ages ranging from 16 to 52 years. The mean age was 22 years 10.5 months. The trainees represented all three years of training 609 (42.2%) in the first year, 291 (20.2%) in their second year and 538 (37.3) in their final year. 955 (66.1%) of the students came from rural areas and 424 (29.4%) came from urban areas. Although most of the students, 821 (56.9%), had no previous teaching experience, one student had been teaching for as long as 25 years and their average teaching experience was 1.2 years.

The correlations between the preferences were used for a varimax factor rotation to extract the main groups of reasons given by the trainees. Three main groups of reasons emerged from the data.

Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var	Cum Pct
1	3.15117	24.2	24.2
2	2.35875	18.1	42.4
3	1.11570	8.6	51.0

Table 2. Three main factors accounting for 51% of the variation.

Table 2 shows that there were three factors above an Eigenvalue cut-off of 1.0 and that these three most important factors accounted for 51% of the variation in the data.

The factor model is shown in table 3. This table has been sorted to clearly show the grouping of reasons in each of the three factors.

It is noticed from table 4 that the reasons grouped unbiasedly by pure numerical calculation under the first factor may be considered on subsequent inspection to be Extrinsic reasons. Those reasons grouped under factor two appear to be Intrinsic reasons and those that fell into factor three are Altruistic reasons. The varimax factor rotation above maintains the orthogonality of the principle

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components and so these three factors are independent of one another. Hence, this finding supports the suggested EIA three factor model of career choice for teacher trainees in Jamaica.

Rotated Factor Matrix:

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Reason 11	.70103	-.08227	.01660
Reason 10	.66659	-.01267	-.03106
Reason 7	.64843	-.06344	-.20270
Reason 8	.60356	-.07654	.23480
Reason 16	.56079	.21813	.18351
Reason 9	.56067	.39423	-.19396
Reason 4	.50818	.18707	.15684
Reason 15	-.03166	.83888	.20144
Reason 17	.00619	.83126	.18496
Reason 12	.11435	.58727	.31134
Reason 19	-.01352	.18180	.77003
Reason 13	.09673	.13051	.76389
Reason 14	.02168	.23027	.59566

Table 3 Factor loadings showing the importance of each reason to each of the three factors.

Factor 1		**Extrinsic Reasons**
Reason 11	(.70103)	Teaching is the profession with the most holidays
Reason 10	(.66659)	Fees for Teachers' College are affordable
Reason 7	(.64843)	I will have enough time to earn extra money
Reason 8	(.60356)	It allows me to be a manager
Reason 16	(.56079)	It offers job security
Reason 9	(.56067)	The salary will be adequate to meet my demands
Reason 4	(.50818)	Teachers enjoy good status in the society as a whole
Factor 2		**Intrinsic Reasons**
Reason 15	(.83888)	It is the profession I have always wanted
Reason 17	(.83126)	I wanted to
Reason 12	(.58727)	I see it as a life-long career
Factor 3		**Altruistic Reasons**
Reason 19	(.77003)	I can make a worthwhile contribution to the social development of others
Reason 13	(.76389)	I can make a worthwhile contribution to the academic development of others
Reason 14	(.59566)	I love children

Table 4 Detailed reasons and the factors to which they are most important (load most heavily)

Conclusion

This study verified that Extrinsic, Intrinsic and Altruistic considerations were three distinct motivations that Jamaican teacher trainees had for choosing the teaching profession. Extrinsic motivation was the most important, accounting for 24.2% of the variation as compared to 14.6% for Altruistic motivation and 8.8% for Intrinsic motivation.

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